



Church on the Cape Newsletter



December 2024

From the Pastor's Desk

Saying thank-you

I realized that I've spent a lot of time saying thank-you lately. That probably means I have a lot to be thankful for—and that is true! As I paid more attention, though, I observed something else. Saying thank-you was changing my perspective. The more I said thank-you, the more I noticed reasons to say thank-you. As I noticed the good things happening around me and acknowledged them, it was as if my eyes were opened to see even more.

That is why it is so transforming to say thank-you to God. It may begin with an intentional spiritual discipline of making a point to find something to thank God for each day. As we build that practice into our lives, it begins to open our eyes to see more ways in which God is blessing us and more reasons to say thank-you.

While many of us associate Thanksgiving with early European immigrants to North America, it really owes its present form to Abraham Lincoln. Lincoln issued his Thanksgiving Proclamation in the midst of the Civil War. He begins his message with these words:

"The year that is drawing toward its close has been filled with the blessings of fruitful fields and healthful skies. To these bounties, which are so constantly enjoyed that we are prone to forget the source from which they come, others have been added, which are of so extraordinary a nature that they cannot fail to penetrate and even soften the heart which is habitually insensible to the ever-watchful providence of Almighty God."

Imagine expressing such gratitude in the midst of the worst conflagration our country has ever experienced. So, then, in this season of Thanksgiving, I intend to embrace the practice of giving thanks—of noticing the times when I should be saying thank-you and asking God to open my eyes to see the blessings and goodness that I would otherwise overlook. I invite you to join me and feel the way in which this can transform your spirit, your relationships with others, and your relationship with God.

Giving to Support Our Church

We are grateful to all those who have responded to our stewardship drive by returning pledges for 2025. We would like to make you aware that we are facing a likely income shortfall for 2024, which means our expenses are exceeding our income. This means we have to draw on reserve funds to make up for the deficit. We are concerned that we may also be facing a shortfall for 2025. If you are able to make an additional gift for 2024 to help close the gap, we would welcome your help. While we are working to make sure our spending is prudent, there are few places where we can significantly reduce our costs without reducing the level of service we are now providing. Again, we thank you for all your support and your commitment to making this a strong and vital congregation.

Lay Servant Ministries

From the beginning of my ordained ministry, I have been an advocate of Lay Servant Ministries. This path of learning and ministry began as Lay Speaking Ministries. It was a pathway for lay people to learn and grow primarily to be able to preach and lead worship. Even in those days, the lay people who participated realized that not all of them would want to preach or lead worship and that there were many other ways they could be in ministry. I am pleased that over the years, this program has evolved into Lay Servant Ministries to recognize the many paths by which lay persons can learn, grow, and embrace various forms of ministry.

This pathway is designed for any layperson who wants to grow in faith and commitment to Christ and become a leader in the ministry of the church. As you might expect, all Lay Servants begin with a basic course, which is an introduction to lay ministry. After completing the basic course, Lay Servants are affirmed by their local church and eligible to take a whole host of advanced courses. These include Methodist history, Preaching, Designing and leading Worship, Ministries of Caring, Ministry with those experiencing Dementia, and many more.

It is my hope to be active in teaching these courses here in Maine as I have in all my other appointments. I would be delighted to have a basic class for interested people here at Church on the Cape, which would also be open to people from other churches. If you are interested or would like to know more, I'd love to hear from you.

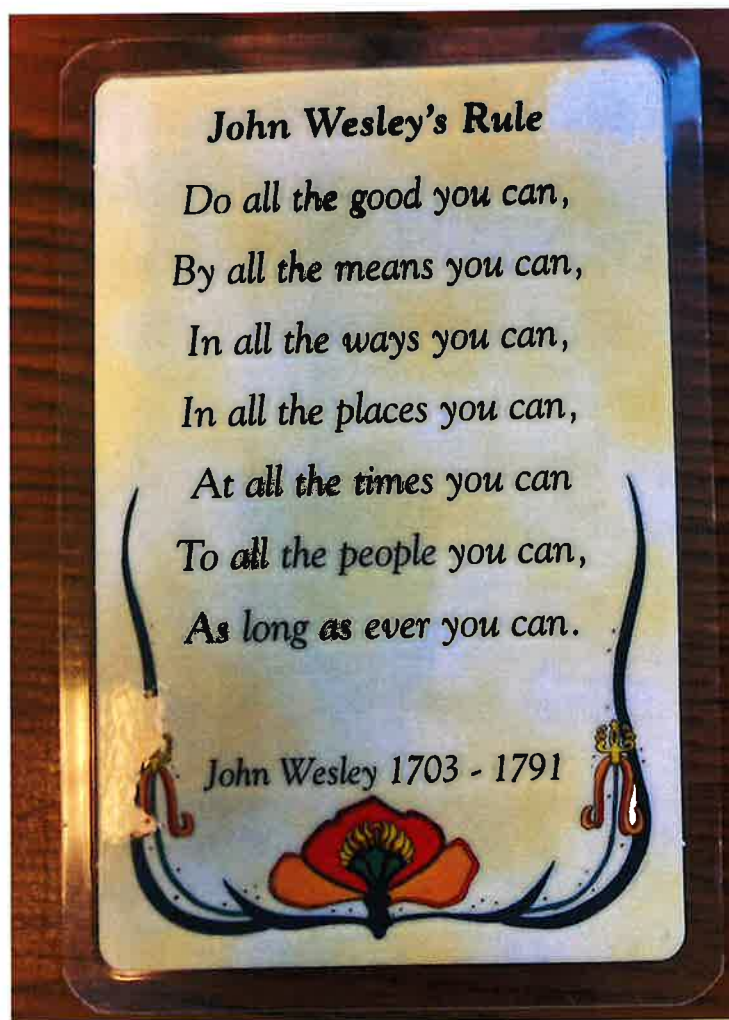
Rev. Greg Smith

Doing All the Good You Can A Critical Foundation Stone of Our Faith

Pastor Greg, at the November 17th, 2024, Worship Service, spoke about our faith's foundation stones, including doing all the good you can possibly do.

The following Doing Good List (John Wesley's Rule), he noted, rests on his desk to remind him of its importance and necessity.

He encouraged us to provoke others to follow John Wesley's Rule, and to always do all the good we can do.



John Wesley's Rule from Pastor Greg, Screenshot by Editor



Christmas Eve Service 8 p.m.

*Christmas Day Service 10 a.m.
with Holy Communion*

Scripture Readings for December

DECEMBER 01 | 1st Sunday of Advent

- Jer 33:14-16
- Ps 25:1-10 (UMH 756)
- 1 Thess 3:9-13
- Luke 21:25-36

DECEMBER 08 | 2nd Sunday of Advent

- Mal 3:1-4
- Luke 1:68-79 (UMH 208)
- Phil 1:3-11
- Luke 3:1-6

DECEMBER 15 | 3rd Sunday of Advent

- Zeph 3:14-20
- Isa 12:2-6
- Phil 4:4-7
- Luke 3:7-18

DECEMBER 22 | 4th Sunday of Advent (Purple or Blue)

- Mic 5:2-5a
- Luke 1:46b-55 (UMH 199)
- Heb 10:5-10
- Luke 1:39-45 (46-55)

DECEMBER 24 | Christmas Eve

- Isa 9:2-7
- Ps 96 (UMH 815)
- Titus 2:11-14
- Luke 2:1-20

DECEMBER 25 | Christmas Day

- Isa 52:7-10
- Ps 98 (UMH 818)
- Heb 1:1-4 (5-12)
- John 1:1-14

DECEMBER 29 | 1st Sunday after Christmas Day

- 1 Sam 2:18-20, 26
- Ps 148 (UMH 861)
- Col 3:12-17
- Luke 2:41-52



*Pastor Greg Announced at the
November 10, 2024,
Service that Adrien Baracco
Is Our New Lay Leader*

Church on the Cape's Christmas Fair

**December 7th From
8:30 am - 1:00 pm**

Christmas elves/helpers for the Christmas Fair are needed. Sign-up sheets are in the front of Bartlett Hall

FAIR DONATIONS ARE NEEDED

Jewelry, Surprise Christmas Packages, Christmas-Themed Baskets, Crafts, Christmas Décor, and Baked and Food Items.

Please bake five dozen of one type of cookie. Bring cookies to the church by 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, December 5th. Baked goods can be dropped off on Friday, December 6th at 4:00 p.m.

ALL SAINTS SUNDAY



Susie Goodwin lights a candle for each departed loved one who died in the last 12 months and was a member or family member of our church. Pastor Greg welcomed families in attendance to take one of the memorial flowers home after the church service.

Everyone in attendance was concurrently invited by Pastor Greg to approach the altar, take a tea-like battery-powered candle, and place it on the memorial table while remembering all those who touched their lives and hearts.

Virtually everyone who could approached the altar and was pleased with the opportunity to share All Saints Day with their loved ones. Thank You, Pastor Greg, for arranging this treasured remembrance for all of us.



Screenshots by Editor

Grace – Street Ministry

An Outreach of Williston-Immanuel
United Church

P.O. Box 7967, Portland, Maine
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(207) 210-7069

Email: gracestreetministry@gmail.com



November 1, 2024

Pastor Jeff, Annie and Bill Hidell

Dear Rev. Greg and Everyone at Church on the Cape,

Although I was aware of the simple numbers (over 1200 pairs of socks and over 300 Dunkin' cards), I was still overwhelmed and amazed by the sheer volume of stuff that arrived at Williston-Immanuel United Church on Wednesday. Pictures were taken, and I hope will be shared with the congregation, because it was really and truly an uber-cornucopia of generosity that took over a significant chunk of Williston-Immanuel's floor space.

As I told you all when you so kindly allowed me to address your congregation, Dunkin' cards are the "get out of jail free" cards on the street, a simple rectangle of plastic that allows a member of the unhoused community to go inside for a bit, have a coffee and a bite, and just forget for a few moments the enormous challenges that come with being unhoused.

And socks. What can you say about socks? They are always in my yellow backpack, and they are particularly crucial during the winter months to help folks avoid frostbite when they're outside sporting Walmart footwear in the midst of whatever combination of wet and cold that nature has decided to throw their way on any given day.

In just a month, on December 1st, we begin the season of Advent, the celebration of the birth of Christ, and the anticipation of His return. The themes of those four weeks are hope, peace, joy, and love. And truly, all four of those themes are embodied in this generous gift that you have provided for the homeless community: the love and care of others that brings hope for a different kind of future, a future filled not with pain and struggle, not with conflict and violence, but with peace and joy. I'm fond of saying thanks for letting me bring your love to the streets of Portland.

But as we approach this sacred season of Advent, I also thank you for reminding me and everyone on the margins of things that Christ's love is a gift for all his people, not just those with the comforting luxury of warmth and housing.

Enjoy the upcoming joys of the holiday season, and thanks again for sharing the bounty of the season with those on the outskirts.

With warmth and blessings,

Pastor Jeff, Pastor Jeffery Logan, Executive Director

Veterans Luncheon

Veterans Day has its roots in what was called Armistice Day, the day when a peace agreement was signed with Germany, ending World War I. Armistice Day was established with a proclamation by President Woodrow Wilson, which reads in part: "Armistice Day will be filled with solemn pride in the heroism of those who died in the country's service and with gratitude for the victory, both because of the thing from which it has freed us and because of the opportunity it has given America to show her sympathy with peace and justice in the councils of the nations." On June 1, 1954, Armistice Day was renamed Veterans Day to honor all U.S. veterans.

On Veterans Day this year, let us remember and honor those men and women who served in the military, and let us continue to pray for our men and women currently serving in the military.

Source: Newsletternewsletter



We had a great time at our Veteran's Luncheon, sponsored by COTC. Several recounted their military experiences, and our special guest, Pastor Greg, answered questions, including his bicycle riding experiences to church. He also showed us how to use the kitchen and helped us wash the eating utensils during cleanup. The food was appetizing, especially the clam chowder donated by Alisons. Jean Baracco delivered the food, drinks, and desserts with the help of David Smith.

From left to right: Rob Olson, Jean Baracco, Ivan Collazo, Diane Hutchins, David Smith, Pastor Greg, and Jon Bangs.

Article and photo by Charlie Benore

LADIES TEA WAS A FUN EVENT

When Annie Hidell heard Sue Ellery announce in church that the monthly ladies' luncheon was canceled because the restaurant they were going to was going to be closed because of the installation of new refrigeration, she asked Sue Ellery if she thought a tea at Annie's place would be nice.

With a nod of Sue's head, plans were put into place. On Friday afternoon, October 25th, the ladies attending the monthly luncheon enjoyed a wonderful tea and fellowship at Annie's. Thank you, Annie, and your helpers, Paula and Wendy!



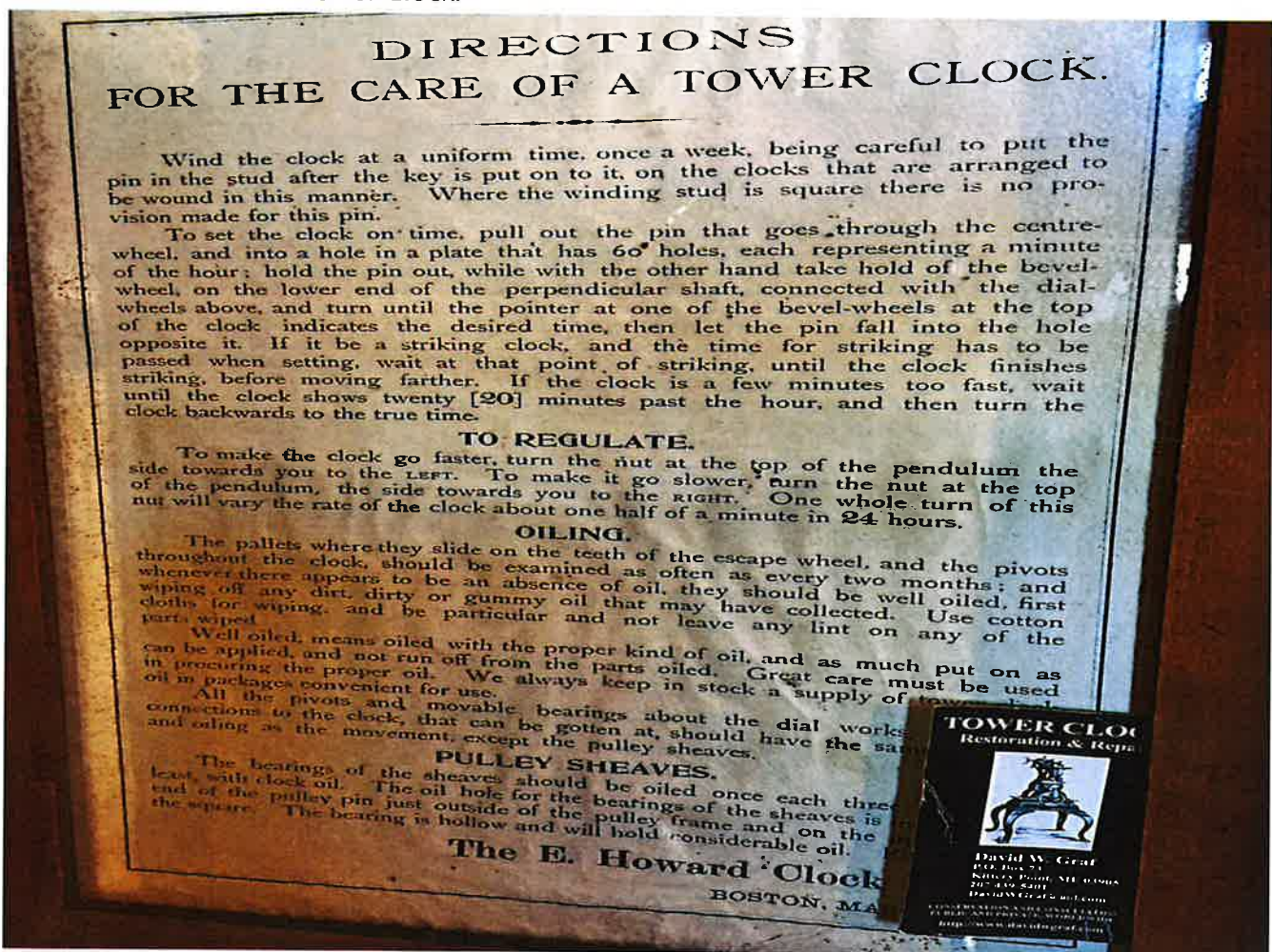
From left to right: Faye Kerr, Sharon Miesel, Paula Farnell, Mary Parker, Roberta Sanborn, Wendy Zarella, Graceanne Barbour, Ginny Hammar, Sue Ellery, and Armit Pak. Also present: Diana Smith and Annie Hidell.
Article by Sue Ellery, photos by Annie Hidell

ADRIEN BARACCO, CARETAKER OF THE COTC TOWER CLOCK

Did you know that the tower clock rings the bell every hour, on the hour, 24 hours a day? That's 154 bell strikes per day or 56,940 every year. As caretaker of the tower clock, I stop by the Church several days a week, check the time on the tower clock, and make adjustments as needed. That includes manually setting the clock for Daylight Savings Time. Changes in temperature can change the pendulum length and timing of the swing, resulting in gains in time in the winter and a loss of time in the summer. Adrien notes that the original weights were rocks placed in a basket. The attached Directions are thought to be original.



Many thanks to my predecessors, Scott Dombrowski and Terry Moulton, for their years serving as caretakers of the COTC Tower Clock.



Article and photos by Adrien Baracco

Church on the Cape A United Methodist Church

We of The Church on the Cape represent various religious and cultural backgrounds and lifestyles. We are young, old, middle-aged, single, married, widowed, divorced, parents, grandparents, and members of extended families.

Above all, we are people who take risks, make mistakes, confess, repent, and try again.

At the center of our community is Jesus Christ, whose life, death, and resurrection are the reasons we are together. The life and hope in this community have more to do with Christ's faithfulness to us than ours to Christ.

Whether you are searching for a faith community or just passing through, we want you to feel at home. Whoever you are, whatever your history, your scars, your gifts; You are among persons like yourself.

Join us from wherever you call home. If you like what you see here, we post our virtual Hymn Sing and Sunday Worship Service on our website, www.churchonthecape.org.

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